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IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as follows:

3. (Amended) A method according to Claim 1, wherein the concentration of glucose is greater than 5mM.

B2 4. (Amended) A method according to Claim 1, wherein the mesangial cells are subjected to mechanical strain.

5. (Amended) A method according to Claim 1, wherein transforming growth factor $\beta 1$ (TGF- $\beta 1$) is added to the culture medium.

6. (Amended) A method according to Claim 1, wherein the possibility of differential expression due to hyperosmolarity is excluded.

SubC1 7. (Amended) A method according to Claim 1, wherein the gene so differentially expressed is a gene which includes a sequence selected from:

- 1) SEQ ID NOS: 1-3;
- 2) SEQ IS NO: 4;
- 3) SEQ ID NO: 5; and
- 4) SEQ ID NO: 6.

8. (Amended) Use of a gene identified by a method according

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to Claim 1, as a diagnostic marker for the progression and presentation of diabetic nephropathy.

9. (Amended) Use of a gene identified by a method according to Claim 1, as an index of disease activity and the rate of progression of diabetic nephropathy.

*22
Amend*

10. (Amended) Use of a gene identified by a method according to Claim 1, as a basis for identifying drugs for use in the prevention and/or therapy of diabetic nephropathy.
